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## Individual Aid in the Welfare of the Club.

The opening editorial in the September CONDOR deals fittingly with the many disadvantages under which the Cooper Club labors owing to the Club's membership being scattered over so much territory, but "which may in the future be largely remedied" etc. The article is well written and forms a rough summary of the general conditions incident to the management of the Cooper Club of today. It also shows that out of a total active membership of 170 or more, a small minority practically constitutes the entire working force and considering this fact the growth of the Club in the past eight years from four members to its present size, reflects greatly on the minority. Besides this though, a heavy percentage of the original reading matter found in THE CONDOR comes from the pens of this same minority gratuitously. This latter is not mentioned in the editorial quoted, but any one can assure himself of the truth of it by looking over the past numbers of THE CONDOR.

So much for the enviable showing made by those members constituting the minority. Now about the remaining members, composing the majority, not that I care to make invidious comparisons, but because due consideration of the subject should prove of value to any member. All of us are interested to a greater or less degree in the study of birds, although some are undoubtedly too busy in other paths of life to do much more than welcome the advent of THE CONDOR on alternate months. Some few are beginners, and the insecurity of their foothold in the study prevents them at present from taking an active part in the work of the Club.

A great many keep records or casual notes of one kind or another on the bird life around them, and some elaborate theirs no doubt, into series of notes, complete as far as possible on some more note-worthy species or groups of species. In this way in the course of a year or so, considerable amount of material is jotted down, most of it of value to the writer or he would not bother about it. The greater part of it consists of little facts or incidents pertinent to bird history and while of value to the individual, it would prove equally as interesting to the Club-at-large. Probably a large share of these notes or records are written and *kept* by Club members who, though too far removed from headquarters to take an active part in the transaction of routine business, are still, in every sense of the word, active field workers. Many of them live in the more remote corners of the state and for that very reason what ornithological work they do is possessed of a greater value, for they are resident observers in localities where other members can at the best pay only strays visits of a few weeks duration.

But for all that we rarely hear from them either in the regular Club meetings or through the pages of THE CONDOR and the question is where does all that good material go to? In conclusion, the acknowledged object of the Club is the highest advancement of the science of ornithology in California, and it should also be the aim of every one of its members to aid as far as possible in the mutual advancement of all the members, rather than the self-advancement of individual members.

JOHN J. WILLIAMS.  
*Applegate, Cal.*



## COMMUNICATIONS.

### RECONNOISSANCES; A REPLY.

Editors THE CONDOR:

The co-authors of "A Summer Reconnoissance in the West," Wilson Bulletin No. 33, seem to take exception to my "destructive" review and criticism which appeared in THE CONDOR recently.

If they had made it as plain in Bulletin No. 33 as they do in their replies, that the list was not intended to be of any general scientific value, the paper would not have called for criticism from anyone. If a crime has been committed it was in taking the statements seriously, but knowing of Mr. Jones' previous careful and conscientious work about Oberlin. I have no apologies to make for supposing this was intended to be equally accurate.

Certainly if a western ornithologist should visit Oberlin for a week or ten days and record two to four birds that do not occur there at all, and a number of others as rare as the Carolina Paroquet or the Short-billed Marsh Wren, he would expect to be called upon by the whole local club for explanation. In this case I was delegated to do it.

Admitting that the Reconnoissance was not intended to have any special value, why should exceptions be taken when inaccuracies are pointed out? We are pleased to note that another trip is being planned "with scientific settings," which will insure accuracy and therefore be welcome by all who are wrestling with the intricacies of geographical distribution in California. FRANK S. DAGGETT.  
*Pasadena, Cal.*

### ADVICE FOR OOLOGISTS.

Editor CONDOR: Many a time when blowing a small egg with a pipe I have nicked it when introducing the pipe through the small blow-hole. But I don't do that any more. Instead of using a blowpipe I now pull a small grass stem and insert the soft white end of it into the egg. This delicate end can be bent in any direction, and eggs can be blown with smaller holes than with a glass pipe. Everyone of these small grass stems is a hollow tube, and some of them can be found that are no larger in diameter than a needle. They are gathered just as you want to use them, and your eggs can be blown as soon as taken. Now don't go to work and try to introduce the stiff green